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dentally the source of his livelihood, thus destroying the fruits of his superior industry, prudence, and thrift. Rather than submit to this, the importer will often add such an amount to the price set down in the invoice as will satisfy the most captious appraiser. The law now compels him to commit perjury; for he must swear that his addition causes the invoiced price to equal the market value, although he may know that the invoiced price plus the addition exceeds the market value by many dollars. That the importer in collusion with the examiner may defraud the government of much money and ruin his commercial rivals, and by means of political influence may secure the removal of a treasury official who refuses to swerve from the paths of duty, are facts that require no demonstration.

Thus it is evident that the customs laws work an injury to the government and to the importer; and it is not the least among their defects that they undermine the self-respect of the citizen, and destroy his respect for the law of the land.

ROBERT WEIL.

*Taxation: Its Principles and Methods.* Translated from the *Scienza della Finanze* of Dr. LUIGI COSSA, with an introduction and notes by HORACE WHITE, together with a compilation of the state tax systems of New York and Pennsylvania. Putnam's Sons, 1888.

The appreciation with which students have greeted Dr. Cossa's little volume is shown by the fact that it has already been translated into the German, Swedish, Polish, Russian, and Spanish languages. No unworthy book could have met with such a hearty reception, and when we look into this, the American edition, it is at once seen to possess those peculiar merits which we have learned to expect in all that Professor Cossa writes. Its definitions are clear, its statements simple, and its classification comprehensive. An illustration of the simplicity of the author's distinctions may not be out of place. One who has studied German text-books on the science of finance knows how hard it is to grasp the discussions which they contain on the subject of *Gebühren*. The reader learns that the payments which go under this name are payments for specific services, but the line to be drawn between fees and taxes he finds somewhat difficult to trace. Notice how clearly and concisely Professor Cossa puts this point:

In scientific language, fees, costs, and charges are the remuneration for public services which are rendered to private individuals at their request. They differ, therefore, from ordinary taxes:

1st. By their object, because the former refer to special services that have been voluntarily sought, and the latter to general services that have been compulsorily offered.

2d. By the criterion of assessment, which, as regards fees, *etc.*, is the amount of expense incurred, and, as regards taxes, the amount of the property of the tax-payers.

After a student has become utterly confused by the politico-philosophic maunderings of German writers on finance, such a flash of simplicity as the above gives a positive intellectual pleasure.

The problem of classification is the hardest problem, so far as form is concerned, which the science of finance presents. The occasions for public expenditure, as well as the sources of public income, in modern states, are so numerous that a writer who desires his treatise to be comprehensive is obliged either to be prolix in his discussions or to carry classification to an extent which destroys literary form. Professor Cossa has chosen the latter alternative, and there are quite a number of pages in his book filled with headings and sub-headings which give it the appearance of an outline for university lectures. It might perhaps be appropriately regarded as the companion volume to the author's well-known *Guide to the Study of Political Economy*.

The idea which Professor Cossa holds respecting the scope of finance as a science is a little different from that with which we have become familiar in the commonly received text-books. According to him, the science of finance "is the body of principles which relate to the public estate (*patrimonio*)."<sup>1</sup> It "divides itself naturally into three parts, which treat of expenditure, of income, and of their relations to each other." This, it will be observed, does not include rules for financial administration, for financial organization, or for the passage of money bills. The broader view of the subject seems to me the preferable one, although this preference may possibly spring from having worked my way into the subject under the guidance of the more comprehensive definition.

The subject of taxation claims the larger share of the author's attention in this volume, and in its discussion many valuable suggestions are presented. The classification of the rules of general taxation into juridical, economic, and political seems to be especially happy. It is like one of Edison's inventions, so simple that we wonder why no one ever hit on it before.

No small part of the value of this book is due to the editor's notes and appendix. In the appendix is to be found a description of the tax systems of New York and Pennsylvania. The notes are in reality short chapters discussing, from the American point of view, taxation of mortgages, of personal property, of corporations, of land values, and taxes on consumption. In the note on the taxation of land values the editor gives his reasons for dissenting from the theory of taxation urged

by Mr. Henry George, but it is doubtful if his argument puts the case in its strongest light. Indeed, it is difficult to see why a theory pertaining to the institution of private property should be brought into a study of finance. At the end of the book there is a comprehensive and most valuable bibliography of the science of finance which the editor has been careful to bring down to date.

HENRY C. ADAMS.

*Essai sur les finances et la comptabilité publique chez les Romains.*

Par GUSTAVE HUMBERT, professeur honoraire à la Faculté de Droit de Toulouse, ancien procureur général près la Cour des Comptes, membre du Sénat. Paris, Ernest Thorin, 1886. — 2 vols., large 8vo, 540, 501 pp.

The line of demarcation between finance and administration is often unclearly drawn. Strictly speaking, the science of finance has two aspects — the economic and the administrative. Finance as an economic science discloses the underlying principles of public revenue and expenditure in their effects on the wealth of the individual and the state. Finance as an administrative science discusses the technical rules which regulate the relations of individual and state. Finance in the administrative aspect does not discuss, for instance, the bases or incidence of taxation. It treats of the financial machinery, its organization, its subjects, and its control. At the present time the administrative side is perhaps no less important than the economic side.

The economic side of Roman finance has been treated in a masterly fashion by Rodbertus; the administrative side has been discussed in the general works of Mommsen, Marquardt, and Madvig. We have now for the first a comprehensive work on one (and perhaps the most important) topic in administrative finance. For M. Humbert confines himself almost exclusively to the questions of control — legislative, administrative and judicial.

The work is the result of twenty-five years' research, and, like the productions of many French professors of law, is distinguished by a thorough acquaintance with the recent German and Italian literature on the subject. In this respect the French jurists have generally been far superior to the French economists, and it is chiefly because M. Humbert is an historian and a lawyer that we may read his conclusions with the comforting assurance that they have been refined in the crucible of careful comparison with acknowledged authorities.

The right of granting the taxes and of fixing the budget during the Republic was reserved to the Senate. The people in the *comitia* pos-